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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUB: INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE HOANG NHU NGOC

REF: SAIGON 182

1. IN A CONVERSAITON WITH AN EMBASSY OFFICER JULY 4 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE HOANG NHU NGOC STATED THAT HIS PRINCIPLE OFJECTIVES ARE PEACE AND THEN THE WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN TROOPS. WHEN ASKED HOW THESE GOALS COULD BE ACHIEVED, NGOC SAID HE DID NOT KNOW.

2. NGOC AND HIS RUNNING MATE, TRAN VAN XUYEN, ARE BOTH CAO DAI (REFTEL). NGOC, WHO SPOKE HIGHLY OF XUYEN, SAID HE EXPECTED TO RECEIVE VOTES FROM ALL POLITICALLY-ORIENTED VIETNAMESE GROUPS EXCEPT THE HOA HAO. HE SAID THE VARIOUSRELIGIONS IN VIET-NAM ARE SPLIT INTO SO MANY FACTIONS THAT THEY CANNOT BE EFFECTIVE POLITICAL FORCES IN AND OF THEMSELVES.

3. NGOC SAID THAT PRESENT GOVERNMENT IS DICTATORIAL AND REPRESSES FREE EXPRESSION OF OPINION. HE WAS ALSO CRITICAL OF FELLOW CAO DAI PHAN KHAC SUU, ALSO A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, AND SAID THAT HE WOULD CONCLUDE NO ALLIANCE WITH SUU.

4. COMMENT: NGOC APPEARS YOUNGER THAN HE IS AND HAS A HESITANT AND NERVOUS MANNER. HIS CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS ARE IN HIS HOME AND SEEM TO CONSIST OF AT MOST A FEW FILING CABINETS.

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